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## **Germany**

### **Livestock and Products**

### **One year after the detection of BSE in Germany**

## **2001**

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#### **Report Highlights:**

**A summary of the BSE situation in Germany one year after the first detection of a BSE case.**

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Includes PSD changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Berlin [GM1], GM

On November 26, 2000 the first detection of BSE in Germany occurred on a farm in Schleswig-Holstein. Now, one year after the incident, the number of confirmed BSE cases in Germany has risen to 124 (7 cases confirmed in CY 2000 and 117 in CY 2001).

The geographical distribution of the confirmed cases is shown in the following table:

State	Number of confirmed BSE cases	Number of cattle in that state	cases per 1 million head
Bavaria	62	4,084,839	15
Lower-Saxony	16	2,829,052	6
Schleswig-Holstein	12	1,318,059	9
Baden-Wuerttemberg	10	1,200,613	8
Rhineland-Palatinate	4	440,737	9
Saxony-Anhalt	4	390,847	10
Saxony	4	546,944	7
Hesse	3	534,157	6
North Rhine-Westphalia	2	1,482,373	1
Mecklenburg-West Pomerania	2	591,391	3
Brandenburg	2	645,900	3
Thuringia	2	387,946	5
Saarland	1	61,078	16
Berlin, Bremen , Hamburg	-	21,854	0
Total	124	14,535,790	9

(Sources: German Federal Ministry for Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture; Federal Office of Statistics, Wiesbaden)

With the detection of BSE, large-scale farming was often blamed in public discussion as the cause of inadequate food safety. However, statistics clearly show that most BSE cases occurred in Bavaria, where small family farms are the dominant form of livestock production.

From January through October 2001 a total of 2,341,359 BSE tests were conducted and 114 cases of BSE were confirmed. Out of these, only 30 cases were discovered through routine testing at slaughter, 64 cases were detected through mandatory testing of perished or put-down animals, 16 cases were animals which had shown clinical symptoms and only 4 cases were detected in destroyed herds or cohorts (animals born on the same farm within 12 month before or after the birth) of a previously confirmed BSE-case.

Since January 25, 2001, BSE tests at slaughter are mandatory in Germany for all cattle above the age of 24 months (the EU requires testing at above 30 months, only put-down cattle have to be tested at the age of above 24 months).

After the detection of BSE on a farm, originally all cattle on that farm, all offspring, and all cattle on other farms that were raised with the infected animal at any time within the first 12 months of life of the infected animal, had to be destroyed. As tests showed that a second case rarely occurred

on the same farm, this provision was relaxed. Since August 24, 2001 the state authority may grant exceptions and only destroy the animals born on the same farm within 12 months before or after the birth of an animal with confirmed BSE. From January through October 2001, a total of 13,815 animals were destroyed based on the above.

### **Risk management by the German Government**

The Federal Ministry for Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture has three pillars for its risk management system: the prohibition of meat and bonemeal (MBM) in feed, the removal of specified risk material at slaughter, and extensive BSE research.

Since MBM is strongly suspected to be a cause of BSE infection, the EU prohibits the use of animal protein in feed for animals destined for human consumption. This ban is effective until July 1, 2003. While the EU allows the use of fats derived from animals as well as the use of dicalciumphosphate and hydrolyzed proteins in non-ruminant feed, in Germany the use of these substances in feed is prohibited.

All specified risk material (brain, spinal cord, skull, intestines) has to be removed at slaughter and has to be destroyed through burning. The use of mechanically recovered meat in food production has been prohibited since April 1, 2001.

For research in connection with BSE, Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease and Scrapie, the German Government (GOG) allocated an annual budget of 27 million DM (about US \$ 12.1 million). One of the objectives is the development of better BSE-tests (eventually to be used on living animals/humans).

### **Impacts on consumption**

During the first months after the detection of BSE in Germany, the private consumption of beef dropped by as much as 70 percent. In the first six months of 2001, beef consumption was reduced by 45 percent compared to the same time in 2001. Because of short consumer memory and/or action taken by the GOG to restore consumer trust in beef, in September 2001 beef consumption was down by only 14.4 compared to September 2000.